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SHINING SEVILLE

IT is a town of a shining dream, of gay colors and bull-fighters, of winding streets and plazas, of gorgeous flowers and orange trees. In it the sun shines as it shines nowhere else—a burning, full orb of gold. To be in Seville is to feel a fine strange riot in the blood. You live, as it were, in a fierce, clear dream. Of all the towns of the world the town of Seville is the most wonderful and magical. It is a place gay and tragical and gorgeous and strange, a place full of art and beauty and glorious barbarism.

You go to the bull-fight, and you hear the shouts of the thousands in the arena. You hear a bursting blare of trumpets. You see a marching of gay and gallant *toreros* clad in finery adorned with gold. They are here to make sport with death. They are here to shake the dice with the grim old conqueror of men. For it is not given to the *torero* to tell whether or not death will visit him in the arena. The bull is a mightier foe than the tiger.

Or you wander into the vastness of the old cathedral. Herein is the glory and the wonder and the mystery of God. Herein live great, strange organ tones. On the vast walls are pictures. Pale lights shine in the distances over dim altars. Kneel here and pray. It is a fitting place.

Bells sound through the hours of the day and through the hours of the night in glorious sunlit Seville. Deep, booming bells, bells of softness, bells of golden tones, bells of tones of silver, bells of strange dread, bells of sadness, bells that send forth peals of joy and happiness.

Are you one who loves the sound of bells? If so, you may take joy of them in Seville.

Are you one who loves beautiful women? If so, you will see them as you pass—entrancing women with glorious eyes. Nowhere will you see such women. If you lose not your heart in Seville, it is because you have none to lose. Take note of them as they come along. A plain woman is so rare that you see her with surprise. There are more beautiful women in Seville than in any other town in Europe. They are full of fire and life and health and grace. They walk with swinging steps. Some of them have in them the wild, fine blood of the Arab; and some of them are descended from the Irish who came to this Seville some century or so ago. Here is a woman coming along. Surely she is Irish. Yes, she is, but she was born here in Andalusia, and her people were born here before her. In her beautiful face is a soft tint of gold coming from being of a land where the glorious sun shines as it never shines in the land of her forefathers.

You enter the Museo where are kept the pictures of Murillo, the great painter. It is filled with his madonnas and saints and angels. Here is a picture of the Divine Child. It is strangely tender and beautiful—and human. The angels and saints and children of Murillo are all most human. Well may it have been that this great artist painted better than he knew.

Here is the Teatro—Circo Esclava. You go in and take a seat, and the music rises around you. On the stage a comic

opera is being played. But the people of the audience are, of the two, more interesting than those of the stage. These people of Seville know the secret of getting the most out of life. They let themselves go. They are not as the cold, restrained people of England. They possess the supreme wisdom that realizes that the present moment is of all moments the best. When it is gone, it is gone never to return, and so they let themselves go. Many of them hum the air that is being sung on the stage; but no one minds. Every one is out to be gay and merry and have a good time. Amongst them is a sense of fraternity. When the opera is over you may, if you wish, go to the back of the stage. Things theatrical are more free and easy than they are in England. The people of the stage are not too proud to meet the members of the audience and to talk with them. And the doing of this means no more than friendliness.

Perhaps, afterwards, you will drop into a *café cantante* in the Alameda. Here you will find things going at a glorious rate. There is a little stage, and on it a performance is being given. It is in a sense a variety entertainment, but it is in no way like a variety entertainment in England. There is no formality about it. The artists are more intimate with, are more in touch with, their audience. Jokes pass freely between them. And now and then an artist comes and sits with friends in the audience. There is a good deal of dancing on the little stage. The bolero is much favored. This is a wild, whirling, very frank dance. But you will see dancers in a London music-

hall that are far more calculated to offend the sense of propriety. Its frankness saves it. There is nothing about it that is prurient or suggestive. It is a wild, maddening dance. And one cannot imagine it being danced anywhere but in glorious and wonderful Seville. For an English audience understands not the spirit of this dance. And so it is that the bolero cannot be danced before them. The cold audience of the North is apt to think that the spirit, the vitalizing essence of this dance is sensuality. This is not so. Its vitalizing essence is the fire and abandon and wonder of intense life. In Seville a child might see the bolero.

Wonderful is the night in Seville. The stars shine with a strange glory, and through the night the bells sound. You are in a city of enchantment. In the blue darkness of the sky above is an effect of magical clearness. Around you are the lights and sounds of the town. Above you is the clear burning of the far stars. And wonderful is the dawn in Seville. There is a trembling in the air, the light comes, and the sun is swiftly up. The beautiful town is flooded with soft gold. You still hear the bells, but their sound now has another meaning. They are the heralds of a new day—a new time.

The old winding streets and the plazas are filled with an intense light. The Guadalquivir is a river of smooth, moving brilliance. And at times there rises in the air the sound of songs. People are singing as they go. The joy of the new day is upon them.

Seville, the town of a shining dream, is awake!

BART KENNEDY.

From the Academy, London.